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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 005021

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL MARR EG IS GOI EXTERNAL GAZA DISENGAGEMENT

SUBJECT: ISRAEL AND EGYPT REPORTEDLY REACH FINAL AGREEMENT
ON DEPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIAN BORDER GUARDS TO GAZA-EGYPT BORDER

Classified By: Ambassador Daniel Kurtzer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Ministry of Defense Deputy Director General Amos Gilad called the Ambassador August 15 to report that Israel and Egypt had reached agreement overnight on the principles and details for the deployment of Egyptian border guards on the Gaza-Egypt border. Gilad said the final touches on the agreement came in phone calls between Defense Minister Mofaz and Egyptian Defense Minister Tantawi and between Mofaz and Egyptian intelligence director Sulayman. The texts are not yet signed, said Gilad, but they are final.

2. (C) Gilad said the next step will be to gain approval by the Israeli Cabinet and the Knesset. He expects significant opposition in the Knesset, including from many parliamentarians who otherwise support disengagement. One specific issue that will arise is whether the Knesset will force the government to get an Egyptian commitment not to provide weapons to the Palestinians. Gilad said he has already asked the Egyptians to consider sending such a letter in order to pre-empt this demand from the Knesset.

3. (C) Gilad said he would provide the texts of the principles and details as soon as they have been submitted to the government. In general, he said, he was pleased that the negotiations had succeeded but actually was more worried than before because the negotiations clearly revealed an Egyptian interest in eroding the security provisions of the bilateral Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Gilad said this agreement on the deployment of border guards maintains the integrity of the treaty, but Egyptian intentions have now been unmasked.

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KURTZER